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LETTER

FROM

Mr. J. BURDETT,

Who was Executed on Friday, Feb. 1.
at Tyburn, for the Murder of Cap-
tain FALKNER, to some Attor-
neys Clerks of his Acquaintance.

Written Six Days before his Execution.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. WARNER, at the
Black-Boy in Paternoster-Row, 1717.

(Price 3 d.)

LETTER

FROM

Mr. J. BORDLEY

Who has been appointed on Tuesday, the 1st
of June, for the purpose of carrying
into effect the provisions of the
new Act of Parliament.



Witness my hand this 1st day of June 1800.

Second Edition

LONDON

Printed for T. WATTS, at the
Black Boy in Poultry, near St. Dunstons Church.

(Price 2s.)

(3)
first you by your Repentance should
avoid that Place, into which (with-
out God's infinite Merits) I am

A LETTER from Mr.
J. Burdett, to some At-
torneys Clerks of his Ac-
quaintance, &c.

S wicked as I have all my
Life been, and as harden-
ed as I now am, yet can
I not endure to think that
one in *Hell* should shew
more pity to his Brethren, and desire
that *Lazarus* from the Dead should be
sent to warn them, lest they also came
into that Place of Torment, than I,
who am alive, should shew to you my
old Companions in my Wickedness;

that you by your Repentance should avoid that Place, into which (without God's infinite Mercies) I am ~~about to enter.~~

There will not be many days, before my being what I am, and being ~~no more~~; give me therefore the same Belief and Credit now, that you would give me ten days hence, should God permit me to appear to you, and tell you in what a State I am. Do not, I intreat you, mock at my Advice, and tell me I am turn'd a Preacher, in my last Hours: I am so; but I tell you truly, I can preach no Comfort to my self, but yet would fain Preach some Security to you. My Education, as you know, was good, and I was bred to read the Holy Scriptures carefully; but now, believe me, I remember nothing of them but what makes against me: all that occurs, is Terror, Wrath, and Condemnation. That Holy Book lies open still before me, but there are Scales upon my Eyes, Hardness upon my Heart, and a Stupidity on all my Faculties and Senses; so that I neither
read

read nor think, but am amazed and
lost in my Confusion.

My Mother and a Sister sit or kneel
continually before me, the very Pic-
tures of Sorrow in Despair: They
every moment lift up their Eyes, their
Hands and Hearts to God, that he
would touch me with a Sense of my
Condition, and give me a true Con-
cern for it; and when their Tears
will let them speak, they call upon me
very saltringly—to pray—that is all
they can bring out. Nor can I an-
swer them a word for Tears: my
Heart is overwhelmed, and I can on-
ly look them and my self into new
Transports of unutterable Grief. *But*
yet I cannot pray. The very Keeper
turn'd away his head, the other day,
for sadness, to see how we were to-
gether, which wounded me so deep,
that had I had any Instrument of Death
by me, I could not surely have out-
lived that moment; to think I had
occasion'd them such Shame and Sor-
row now, and had entailed it on them
for their whole Life! O God! the
Pangs which that one Consideration
gave,

gave, and still gives me, are such as
 cannot be conceived by any Heart,
 that is not in the same condition with
 my own. This is the Recompence
 such Sons as I make to their Parents
 and their near Relations! But what
 is this to you? It is indeed as no-
 thing, if you have neither Parents nor
 Relations in the World: But if you
 have, believe me when I tell you,
 that the Concern I have for them,
 and the Concern they shew for me,
 give me a thousand times more Grief
 and Pain of Heart, than all the Appre-
 hensions I have of Shame and bodily
 Pain, that may attend me at the Place
 of Execution. This is one Warning I
 would have you take; and could you
 apprehend this Torment feelingly but
 half an hour, I know not but it might
 preserve you from feeling it for ever
 after. But hear the rest—I who
 am, upon all Occasions else, as soft
 and melting as a Child, yet am not
 moved at all, either by their Intrea-
 ties or Example, to join with them in
 Prayer, altho' it be for the Salvation
 of my Soul. No, not a Thought of
 mine can tend that way: my Heart
 is

is quite insensible and dead to all such Purposes. I wondred at it, that I could not say so much as *Amen* to a Prayer that my poor Mother prayed, and which I thought was the most affectionate, most pertinent, and proper to my Case, that could be fram'd; so proper, that it seemed to fit nobody's Case besides: and yet I could not bring my self to say *Amen* to it. Judicial Hardness certainly! that a Man cannot pray for the greatest Good that can befall him, nor pray to be deliverd from the greatest Evil!

Not that I do not remember how great a Sinner I have been, or yet how great my Punishment will be; (for those two Considerations are continually before me) but that I reason, when I think at all, in this Manner: If a more than ordinary Portion of God's Grace be absolutely necessary to the rescuing and restoring one of the greatest Sinners in the World, to a State of Repentance, and that such a one may by his Sins justly provoke the Almighty to withhold that Grace, what shall he do? or how shall he repent?

repent? I know I am that Sinner; and by the Hardness of my Heart, I find I have not that Assistance. How can I stir? I feel I do not stir at all. Distress'd Condition! But yet I must acquit my great Creator of all Injustice in this Proceeding. 'Tis what I knew before might come, as well as I find it now. 'Tis what I brought upon my self: 'Tis the Proceeding of the wisest and the tenderest Fathers we have with their Sons, when so enormously ungracious, wicked, and unreclaimable, by all the Methods they could take: They cast them off; they leave them to themselves. So am I left—— and tho' I say with my Lips *God help me*, yet in my Heart I cannot so much as hope *he will*, my Sins are so provoking.

They tell me, that our Saviour's Sufferings were so meritorious, that they made sufficient Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, tho' never so many and great. I have no manner of Distrust of that; I always thought, considering who he was, that his least Sufferings were, and must have

have been of Infinite Price and Merit;
 But what are they to me, or any one
 besides, unless applied by Faith and
 true Repentance? The Pardon is in-
 deed proclaimed, but I have never
 had the Heart to sue it out in Form,
 so that I stand thereby but the more
 obstinate Offender. The universal
 Pardon is indeed laid down, but none
 can be a Shaker of it, but upon such
 Conditions as I have never yet thought
 of fulfilling. I never could believe
 that God was wanting to a Man, but
 that a Man was always wanting to
 himself, and to the Assistances that
 God afforded him, with which he
 might and ought to have co-operated.
 And surely on the Abuse of Grace,
 the constant Neglect of these Assi-
 stances, and the continually repeated
 Despite done to the good Spirit (that
 will not always strive with Man) that
 does, even in our own Opinion, justi-
 fy God's withdrawing and withholding
 them from us; and then we perish
 irrecoverably. I cannot but condemn
 my self, let me do what I will. 'Tis
 I that have shut my Eyes, and stopp'd
 my Ears, and brought this Hardness
 upon me.

B

on

on my Heart, so that I neither see,
 nor hear, nor understand, how to be
 healed. They press me also with the Exam-
 ples of many great notorious Sinners;
 both in and out of Scriptures, who
 ran a longer Course of Wickedness,
 and much more mischievous, they
 say, than mine; who yet at length
 were turned to God by true Repen-
 tance, and were saved. I doubt it
 not at all: his Mercy has no Bounds;
 his Goodness may be as extensive as
 his Power. Forgiveness always fol-
 lows timely and sincere Repentance;
 but he must give Repentance where he
 finds it not, or else Forgiveness will
 not follow, if we will take his Word
 for it; and he who does not find his
 Heart turned to Repentance, reaps lit-
 tle Comfort from whatever can be
 said of its most blessed Fruit, For-
 giveness. I do not think it is impos-
 sible for God to touch my Heart, even
 yet, and bring me to Repentance: I
 only know I have out-sinned all rea-
 sonable Expectation of it. And till I
 feel some Tokens of that blessed Dis-
 position

position in me, the Fountain of Hope seems to be quite dry'd up to me. When I consider in what manner I have led my Life, for the seven or eight Years last past of it; and recollect how almost every Day and every Night thereof has been fill'd up with strange Impieties and Profanations of one kind or other, with execrable Oaths, unheard of Blasphemies and Curses, with almost a perpetual Drunkenness, with Whoredoms and Adulteries never to be numbred up, and Villanies of every kind that can be thought upon, and more than can be thought upon by Men who have a Spark of Honesty, of Virtue, or Religion left. When I remember this has been my Life, and these my constant Habits, how can I think that God should change me in an instant? If peradventure I could point out but one single Day, of all those Years wherein I had not called on God, lightly or earnestly, in Folly or in Rage, to DAMN ME, and that good single Day would make Attonement for the rest, I verily believe that single Day could not be found in all that

number. What reason has such a Man as this, to hope for a miraculous unusual share of Grace, only because without it he is lost? No, such a Life as this has found the End it righteously deserved: it ended in the killing of a Man; a Stranger, inoffensive, unprovoking. I ran him through the Heart, thoughtless of Death, impenitent, and unprepared. I gave him not a Moment's time, to recommend himself to God's Mercies; but sent him, with his Sins all fresh about him, to give his last Accounts to his great Judge. And would not this alone deserve to weigh down any Man to Hell, without the adding to it, what a valuable and useful Life I robbed the Publick of, and how much Sorrow, Loss, and Misery, I heaped upon his Family and Friends? Behold in me the Justice of God's Judgments, in bringing me to a violent and shameful Death, and leaving me to reap the bitter Consequence of an impenitent and harden'd Heart!

I rose betimes this Morning, I to write this Letter to you, whilst the Contents of it were strong upon my Mind. It is the Fruit of all my Night's Study. I drank (according to the ways of this accursed Place) exceedingly hard, that I might sleep, and think of nothing, but Sleep departed from my Eyes, I was most strangely awake, and sober to Amazement, and I could think of nothing else but what I have set down; and never thought so seriously and long together, I doubt, in all my Life! and since I came into this House of Horror, I have not had so easy a Thought as I now have, upon the reading over what I have written to you. The bottom of that can only be, the Hope I have, that what I have written may have some weight with you, and that in the Description of my sad Estate, you may read a great deal of your own; and by your Care and timely departing from those evil Ways that brought me hither, may come to live and die happily.

I never gave you good Advice before, nor ever received any such from you. We have hitherto only encouraged one another in all sorts of Wickedness, and helped to make each other as odious to God above, and as mischievous to Man here, as we possibly could. The Work is finished upon me; but you have Time before you, and may, if you will, prevent your final Ruin. You can do me no service in the World, I can do you the greatest, if you will let me be your Counsellor, and follow my Advice. Let it be so, and let me have the Advantage over you in this, that I first moved you to Repentance and Amendment; and you, if moved, may have the Advantage over me for ever. My Time is so appointed and so near, that I can count the very Hours I have to live, and 'tis that Consideration kills me quite, when I but think of forming a Resolution of Repenting: for what Conviction could I have my self, or what Proof could I give the World, that such a Resolution was sincere, when I knew beforehand

hand I could have but eight or ten
 poor Days, to bring forth Fruits meet
 for it, and all that while under the
 Expectation of the Sword of Justice
 falling on my Head? The Matter is
 not so with you; you are not so con-
 demn'd; your Life is still uncertain,
 and your Death removed as far as it
 pleases God. Do you but form good
 Resolutions of Repentance and A-
 mendment presently, and your Un-
 certainty of Life and Death will be
 a good Testimony to your Conscience
 that such Resolutions were sincere, be-
 cause you made them, and resolved
 to keep them, whilst you lived, whe-
 ther you lived a great while, or a
 little. ^{and because you have} ^{often} ^{known} ^{the} ^{Opportunities}
 This makes, I think, a great and
 very happy Difference betwixt the
 Resolutions of Repentance which are
 made by one in Health and at his Li-
 berty, and those which another makes
 under the Sentence of Condemna-
 tion; altho' the former should hap-
 pen to die within as small a time as
 there usually passes betwixt the Con-
 demnation and the Execution of a Cri-
 minal;

minal: and should not have the Satisfaction of knowing, by Experience and long Proof, that his Repentance was sincere, no more than the condemned Penitent could have. So much there is in Resolutions that are free and unconstrain'd, that if the World were mine, I could, methinks, exchange it readily, to be in that Condition.

And this is the Reason why I believe you have not yet outlood all Opportunities of being saved, as I have done; because you are yet at Liberty, and free to chuse, whether you will continue in your wicked Ways, or will betake yourselves to better; and because you have, for ought you know, the Opportunities of proving by Experience, and the Course of your future Life, the Truth and the Sincerity of your Resolutions to live in the Fear of God, and in Obedience to the Precepts of the Gospel, which I, and such as I, can never have: who have the Period of my Life determin'd to an Hour; and all the Interim have that Hour continually before my Eyes.

Here

Here I am interrupted by a good Man, who comes to bring me Spiritual Comfort, if I can receive it: You shall be sure to hear from me again, and know the Issue of our Conference, if it be good for you, and I have leisure to give it. If not, make much of this, and read it seriously, and twice; and ask yourselves, not one another, what you think of it? And mind the Answer that your Heart gives, and follow the Resolutions that you then incline to make, and think reasonable. I am, but in a truer Sense than I have ever been before,

Your Affectionate Friend,

J. B.

F I N I S.

C

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